

time, not totally unlike the artwork one admires on the walls of public toilet cubicles today. Except that we figured the pictures had probably been done in old Zog's bedchamber, or maybe in the family rec room. That sort of thinking has been revised, however, and the holders of advanced degrees in Primitive Caveman Art now tell us that these amazingly true to life renderings represent far more than superb doodling or graffiti. It is now felt that the images painted onto the rock walls of the caves, using bits of colored ochres ground and mixed with animal blood and fats, were intended to capture the animals' spirits; the idea was that when the actual hunt came to pass, the pictorial predictions of man triumphant over beast would come true. And the paintings, it seems, were not applied to the walls of Early Man's living quarters. Rather, these particular underground chambers were sacred areas, used for no other purpose than to dwell on the hunt to come.

And in this way, the ancient fighting bull became perhaps the first animal ever to be represented in an art form, a form which, thankfully, exists to this day in those caves of Southwestern Europe.

The American taurine artist and matador de toros John Fulton was aware of these primitive painting techniques of the cavemen and, thousands of years later, employed a similar procedure in many of his own works, mixing bulls' blood into his paints and thus linking the two disparate eras.

PAINTERS OF MODERN TOREO

Yes, it is a long jump from "the dawn of time" to the eighteenth century, A.D., but it was, after all, unlikely that a *bos taurus ibericus*, or present-day toro bravo, would be the subject of many paintings until tauromaquia took root. And the art's modern version did not flower until the appearance on the scene of the *rondeño* Pedro Romero, widely acknowledged as the father of *toro* as we know it today, in the mid to late 1700s.

THE BIRTH OF THE CARTEL

Also about this same time, the popular form of spreading news began to change. The traditional method for centuries had involved the town crier who walked through the streets ringing a handbell and calling out the latest news. (Paul Revere put on an early version of a "special news bulletin" in this fashion, except that he was mounted and forgot his bell.) But as the eighteenth century progressed and the printing press became more and more a part of every day life, posters proclaiming important events -- the news, as well as coming attractions -- began to appear in public areas, and with literacy on the rise, these broadsheets developed into ever more important means of "getting the word out."

The earliest known printed taurine cartel announced two corridas in Madrid, to be held on September 19 and 30 of 1737. The first such carteles told little more than who, what, when, where -- and how much. But as time passed, these printed announcement pieces evolved into attractive works of art in their own right. The first cartel featuring artwork of which we are aware appeared in 1780, touting a corrida in El Puerto de Santa Maria. Through the nineteenth century the appearance and style of carteles became more sophisticated and eye-appealing, incorporating increased amounts of artwork, at first in black and white but later in color. Among the trailblazers of this new art was Daniel Perea (of whom more later).

But it was the twentieth century when the cartel as we now know it finally came about, manifesting itself most forcefully during the "Golden Age" of taurine cartel artists: that of Llopis, Domingo, Reus and Flores. Virtually all taurine painters of the last hundred years, including Picasso, have involved themselves with cartel art, which is by far the outlet of an artist's work most visible to the public at large.

GOYA

Francisco Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828), the court portrait painter from Aragon who also often depicted

the common man -- one of the very first of the European painters to do so -- claimed in his later years to have been a *torero*. Whether he really had been is not known, but there can be no doubt as to his interest in the *corrida*. In his monumental series, the *Tauromaquia*, Goya combines ordinary people and the bulls in mortal confrontation. Indeed, the bloody combat he depicts seems almost equally mortal for the humans as it does for the horses and the bulls. The series traces the history of the art of *toro* and represents a sort of precursor to a highlights film of Great Moments in *Tauromaquia* up to that time -- 1816. These magnificent black and white prints made from engraved metal plates comprise a group of thirty-three taurine scenes which one can find in the Prado in Madrid, as well as often on tour to other of the world's great museums. This particular series was one of the few that was actually published during Goya's lifetime.

But Goya's taurine works of art go back many years before the *Tauromaquia* series. He painted several portraits of *toreros* during his youthful years in Madrid, as well as a number of small scenes of the local plaza de toros, in the 1770s. His familiarity with the bullring is evident in his later *Tauromaquia* engravings, whose viewpoints place the observer in the middle of the arena where the action is happening.

Some people consider many of Goya's works "weird" or "spooky," particularly those with an enigmatic or seemingly sadistic bent, as can be found in the series known as the *Caprichos* and *Disasters of the War*. Dark, grotesque and fantastic forms dominate the scenes of these two collections. But not so those of the *Tauromaquia* -- these are slices of life from corridas which would have been instantly recognizable to the *madrileño-on-the-street*. Yet the talent of the master is still present; the sunlight may pick out the centerpiece of the picture with intense brilliance, but the darkness is back there, too, and it is menacing.

Goya lived a very long life, especially for his times -- he died at